(c) the necessary steps being taken and proposed items to be taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. CHANDRASEKHAR RAO): (a) to (c). In order to regulate service conditions and to provide welfare amenities etc. to workers engaged in construction activities, the Government have enacted the Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1996. Responsibility for implementation of the Act lies with the Central and State/UT Governments in the establishments failing in the Central and State sphere respectively. Implementation machinery of the respective Governments are advised from time to time to ensure the effective implementation of various provisions including welfare measures as stipulated under the Act.

Demand made by Newspaper workers

2487. SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether newspapers workers have presented a ten point charter of their demands;

(b) if so, the details of their demands; and

(c) the Government's response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. CHANDRASEKHAR RAO): (a) and (b). The All India Newspaper Employees Federation (AINPEF) had submitted a copy of the Charter of Demands, dated 31.12.2002 which they served on the employer's organisations *viz.* Indian Newspapers Society and the Indian Languages Newspapers Association. The Charter of Demands, *inter alia,* included revision of wages, adoption of a fitment formula for revision of basic wages, new grouping of employees according to the nature of their jobs, payment of dearness allowance with hundred per cent neutralization, increase in House Rent Allowance, revision of City Compensatory and Night Shift Allowance and payment of pension to Newspaper employees etc.

(c) The recommendations of the last Wage Board namely the Manisana Wage Board, which were accepted by the Central Government in December, 2000 are yet to be fully implemented by the State/Union

Territories. Hence, it may be premature at this stage to constitute another Wage Board.

Schemes for benefit of tea or coffee garden labourers

2488. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the labourers employed in tea or coffee gardens have been facing a lot of problems due to non-availability of various beneficial schemes;

(b) if so, the details of the schemes which have been formulated for the benefits of labourers working in tea and coffee gardens; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to mitigate their sufferings?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. CHADRASEKHAR RAO): (a) to (c) Tea Board and Coffee Board have welfare schemes for the benefit of plantation workers. The schemes are supplemental in nature as the plantation management has the primary responsibility of looking after the welfare of workers.

Tea Board also supports some welfare programmes and activities for the benefit of tea plantation workers and their dependants such as education (stipends, construction & extension of schools and colleges etc.) and health care (purchase of medical equipments, construction and extension of hospitals, etc.) through their regular plan schemes.

Coffee Board has been extending financial support towards labour welfare measures in the coffee plantation sector under its labour welfare scheme. The benefits extended are educational stipends and meritorious awards to the children of workers employed in coffee farms and processing centres and donations to educational institutions and health care centres located in the coffee growing regions to strengthen the infrastructure facilities.

Further, with an objective to improve socio-economic conditions of plantation labourers particularly women labourers as well as for skill development, the Coffee Board operated a Human Resource Development (HRD) programme/scheme during Ninth Plan and is continuing it in the Tenth Plan also which involves assistance for providing machinery/equipment to support the skill development programme, *in situ* training on Knitting, Bee keeping, Kitchen gardening, Poultry & Piggery